# PUDUKKOTTAI STATE

# WAR INFORMATION BUREAU

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LECTURE LXXXIII.

## RUSSIAN PREPARATIONS AND STRATEGY.

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**Stalin.**

From his simple office in the red-walled Kremlin, Joseph Stalin, supreme ruler of 180,000,000 people, has stretched forth his hand across the 8,250,000 square miles of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and made mighty preparations for the struggle he knew was at hand. It is only eight months since Germany attacked Russia, but in that time Stalin's naval, military and air commanders have brought out of the fastness of Siberia, from the desolate northern tundra, from the ever-humming factories of the Donetz, Ukraine and Moscow region more new inventions, more startling developments and improvements on old methods than sprang from four years of the last war.

Because some have been reported only as incidental to the vast struggle of the two greatest land-Powers in Europe, because many have never been reported at all, this aspect of the Russian war has received little attention.

To understand the significance of some of the most remarkable achievements of the Russians during the last 20 years, while the world regarded the Red Army as a disorderly rabble (an impression "confirmed"

in Finland) and the Air Force paratroops as a peculiar joke, it is necessary to delve a little into Stalin's strategy.

**Army Expansion.** Of Russia's economic Five-Year Plans the whole world has heard: of her Five-Year military plans no details ever leaked out, and it is only now that they are being tested in the flames of war across half Europe and the greater part of Asia that their wisdom can be appreciated. There are two great defensive positions upon which, if all else fails, the Red Armies can fall back and wage a steady war of attrition for years—in the Ural Mountains, and the mysterious area behind the Caspian Sea, north of Turkestan. With this in mind, the Red General Staff made careful preparations for war with Germany. When Hitler trebled his seven Army divisions, then trebled them again to sixty-three, Russia did not worry very much, despite the fact that all the reinforcing was done in neighbouring East Prussia. But the minute Germany created *armoured* divisions, Stalin started to build masses of tanks and develop Red armoured divisions.

**Five-Year Plans.** In 1937 the Germans began to build an army of 300 divisions composed of young men under thirty, an army which could not be fully ready until 1943, when nine classes of 500,000 men each had been called to the colours. Russia started the Army Five-Year Plan. In the first period, from 1936–40, they had to build a force able to *resist* an attack on two fronts, by Germany and Japan—that is, a purely defensive force; the second period, from 1941–45, was needed to make the Army capable of holding one front while an attack was launched on the other—a half-defensive, half-offensive force; the final period, from 1946 onwards, was to see an Army capable of attacking on both fronts—a purely offensive force.

**Why Russia did not Join the Allies in 1939.** It is a fact that for their attack on Germany the Russians planned to reach Pressburg, in Czechoslovakia, and use this area as a springboard. Germany—and Britain—got to know, and as the Russian Army Plan could be completed as swiftly as Germany's, the Nazi General Staff realised that the danger was serious. Germany took Czechoslovakia, unhindered by politicians who did not want any Russian ascendancy but realised they had to fight when Poland was invaded.

London and Paris actually expected Russia would join them in September 1939, but the Russians had precise information about the real value of the German Army, Panzer divisions and *Luftwaffe*. They realised also that in the event of an open alliance with the Allies they could expect no aid, even by air. This was what happened to Poland.

**Russia gains time to Prepare.** Gaining time by the signature of his pact with Hitler, Stalin took part of Finland to form a northern shield for Leningrad, Bessarabia to make a southern buttress, and rushed defence works and stores in the Caspian region. How wise these precautions are seen to be to-day! Stalin noted the dominant lessons of the French campaign—that Germany succeeded beyond even the dreams of the Nazi General Staff (who never anticipated French armies throwing in their hand after but two hours dive-bombing, as happened on the Meuse and Sedan), and that when the French were thrown back on the Somme and Loire the Germans still believed in their fighting capacity, which was why the Germans made the biggest mistake of the war in not directing their main forces against Britain, who through Dunkirk, recovered the backbone of her Army, the professional soldiers and regular officers.

**New Divisions.** Stalin noted that Germany had been forced to war before she was ready as was proved by the fact that at the end of May she could not cope with France and Britain at the same time. Russia had two years to complete her preparations. Then–she raised 200 divisions of men under twenty-five, a huge second-line Army, and reserves of 10,000,000 men—10,000,000 men! She put the lower quality troops and material into the Finnish campaign, which she knew she would win, anyhow—even the rest of the world said so while the fight was at its height.

**Russian Communications.** Russian railways are few, and slow. Russia cannot build good roads because she lacks stone, and what roads are constructed soon deteriorate because of hard frost and sudden thaws. Supplying an army by rail from other countries meant more difficulties, for the gauge is different, and anyway, their total length in the whole Soviet Union is exactly the same as that of the French railway system!

**The Stalin Canal.** A Western European expert solved the problem by arranging to bring supplies from behind the Caspian Sea to Western Russia by waterways. Here again Stalin liked Five-Year Plans. The first plan to be completed was the construction of the Stalin Canal. Linking Leningrad with the White Sea, via Lakes Ladoga and Onega, the canal was first cut deep enough for 7,000-ton vessels, medium cruisers. It was intended to make it suitable for 35,000-ton battleships, because the lakes can take these capital ships, but there was no time for that.

**The Don-Volga Canal.** The second Canal Plan came to the world as a complete surprise. Look at a map of Russia and see how the Don, running into the Sea of Azov, curls until it nears the Volga, emptying into the Caspian Sea. Across the sixty miles of land Stalin's engineers are building a dead-straight canal with but two sluices, because the Don is only 25 metres higher than the Volga at this point. The strategic importance of this might become very great. Russia's whole canal system was based on her mighty Volga, which wriggles a serpentine course from the Caspian across all Western Russia to somewhere near the Valdai Hills, where it originates in a marsh, not like most rivers in hills. Its 2,400 miles have been expanded and developed by canals, so that by connecting the Valdai Hills end with Leningrad—and the Stalin Canal—submarines, destroyers and small ships, apart from countless thousands of barges laden with materials of war, will be able to travel from the Baltic or the White Sea—even from far Vladivostok—to the Caspian and Black Seas.

**The Azov Dam.** The link with the Black Sea was obtained through a narrow strait from the Sea of Azov. The building of a dam across this strait raised the water-level in the Sea of Azov so that it could take big ships, and then a canal across the Isthmus of Perekop (joining Crimea to Russia) opened the waterway to Odessa, facing the main mouth of the Danube. As the Danube takes 3,000-ton boats—equivalent to the load of six 50-wagon trains—supply problems for the biggest army in the world were solved. But now Russia has lost this district to Germany, and the Nazis are seeking to exploit it to the full.

**The 100-Ton Tank.** When Russia began the war she had a large tank fleet; she is now said to be mass-producing a 100-ton tank with terrific gun power—a horrific

weapon, far superior to the biggest the French put in the field, half-a dozen 72-ton tanks which scared the lives out of the few Germans who met them. Remember, there are a lot of them, but they have not necessarily been in action on a big scale—yet. They'd be grand in an offensive.

**Aircraft Invention.** Russia has invented a new fighter 1.18 with a speed of some 400 m. p. h., cannon and machine-guns; it is the equal of the Spitfire and accorded Spitfire treatment to the first foolhardy, vainglorious *Luftwaffe* units sent into the fray. These are backed by good, fast, heavy bombers, and enormous quantities of the D. B. bomber 260 m. p. h. only, but good enough for night bombing.

**Russia's New guns.** Devastating guns have been installed on Russia's latest fighters—guns which smash heavy shells through German tanks as if they were made of butter, sending columns reeling off the roads in piles of jagged, smoking, useless metal.

**The 'Mad Torpedo'.** In addition, the Stormovik dive-bomber, to which Lord Beaverbrook paid tribute on his return from Moscow, is equipped with what the Germans have called "the mad torpedo."

This gives a rather erroneous impression as, in fact, there is no such thing as an "aerial torpedo" used by planes, in the sense that the missile has its own motor. Moscow radio stated in November last that a new projectile now used by the tank-hunting Stormoviks leaves a fiery trail after being launched, smashes through tank armour and explodes the vehicles like balloons.

It is most probable that this is a development of the cannon carried on many planes, including some in the R. A. F., and in particular, the American Bell Airacobra, which is fitted with a 37-mm. cannon. This is very little smaller than the anti-tank shell used on the ground. The Russians have probably fitted a big cannon between the wheels of the Stormovik, which also carries bombs. A heavy, armour-piercing shell would have the velocity of the gun's explosion, plus its own weight, plus the velocity imparted by the plane's dive. This would account for its terrific force.

**The L. 760.** In addition, the Red Air Force has a plane with six motors—the L. 760—which by only 2 feet misses being the biggest plane in the world. When acting as a bomber it has a crew of ten, and a range of 1,864 miles at 186 m. p. h. Its bomb-load is secret, but when it is realised that as a transport plane (capable of carrying paratroops) it can hold 64 people, the tonnage of explosive that can be taken aboard with only ten men must be very high. Its six Hispano-Suiza engines develop a total horse-power of 6,600, and with a wing span of 210 feet, it weighs 103,000 lb.

**The Ice-Breakers.** A magnificent fleet of ice-breakers is keeping open the approaches to Archangel in winter, so that the United States can pour in supplies. This is the reason for America's abandoning Vladivostok as their main port of arrival—a move which at first mystified everybody. There are twelve of these lumbering, slow vessels, and three or four are 12,000 tons—a tremendous size for an ice-breaker. They will frustrate Hitler in the Arctic.

**Amazing Submarines.** On Vladivostok is based a big fleet of submarines—never fewer than 50—and many squadrons of warplanes. Vladivostok is not ice-free, however, and so the submarines are of a very special type—so are their crews. They travel 20 miles under the ice to reach the open sea. This is perhaps Stalin's most amazing achievement, surpassing Jules Verne, rivalling the fantasies of America's scientific pulp magazines, which used to be so familiar on your book-stalls. Just imagine the queer, grim journey in pitch blackness, where periscopes cannot be used. Think of the strain on commander and men.

Japan's fleet fears the fate of the Italians at Taranto; her matchwood towns, all well within range, fear the fate of Bremen and Hamburg and Kiel. Japanese aviation is far removed in military value from the *Luftwaffe*.

**The Russian Fleet.** The Russian Fleet was planned by Lenin with reference to the proposed canal system I have explained. Stalin improved on the idea of just an Atlantic Fleet based on Murmansk, by constructing a tri-purpose navy for use in the Baltic, the Atlantic or the Black Sea by means of the Stalin and

Volga-Don canals. He abandoned the Tsar's policy of holding the Bosphorus and Dardanelles to give breathing-space to the Russian Navy.

In the Baltic—where, be it noted, although they have nothing to match the German battleship TIRPITZ—the Russians have never been brought to a fleet engagement—there are still two old 23,000-ton battleships, six 2,900-ton destroyers; twelve of 1,800-tons, 15 old destroyers, and 12 sea-going torpedo-boats.

**Vladivostok.** Vladivostok means "Dominator of the Orient". What an apt name! Stalin has made it worthy of its title, and has converted it into a mighty fortress, a perpetual pistol pointed at the heart of Japan, third member of the Axis. In the same way as he employed his scientists and explorers in the bitter Arctic waters, to lay the basis for vast strategic plans, Russia's Prime Minister asked them to develop the world's strangest supply route —across the brow of the earth.

To-day steamers travel on a regular schedule from Murmansk to Vladivostok—three times the width of the Atlantic—carrying iron and steel, machinery and workmen to forge the mighty pistol that is Vladivostok. Here, between the immense estuaries of the rivers Oussouri and Amour (the Amour is 2,500 miles long), they built a port capable of dealing with everything America, for instance, could send.

**Industrialisation.** A great new industrial belt has been built behind the Caspian and Aral Seas, running right to the Chinese border. Into this area Stalin has packed a great number of factories, thousands of workers and a first-class communication system, and now he is busy arranging the links with India and Iran for which it is so well suited.

Here the Russians have a greater producing machine than in the Urals, a greater war potential than Hitler, or the world, dreamed of. To it, as to the Ural region, he has shunted factories wholesale from the lands around Moscow and Rostov. Machines big and small, huge and delicate, are being carted hundreds of miles, to be reassembled in strange surroundings. There have been astonishing feats of organisation and adaptability, factories which produce hundreds per cent more after a terrific shake-up.

# WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

## 14—2—42 to 20—2—42.

**Two events** of the week stand out in importance and gravity, the fall of SINGAPORE and the escape of the German warships from BREST.

**Singapore** fell on Sunday after a heroic struggle. The defenders—Britishers, Australians and Indians carried on a brave fight against odds, contesting every inch of ground, and in the final stages engaging the enemy in hand-to-hand fights at every street corner. During the last two days their gallant struggle even revived a ray of hope. But lack of planes, guns, and ammunition was their serious handicap from the outset. The enemy cut off supplies of food and water; and when he captured PALEMBANG also the line of withdrawal by sea was cut off, and surrender became inevitable. It is to be feared that in spite of the scorched earth policy a large quantity of stores has fallen into the enemy's hands. Other events of the FAR EAST are summarised below:-

**Burma.**—The battle of MALAYA over, the battle of BURMA has begun. In addition to two divisions already in BURMA, the Japanese have transferred large contingents from MALAYA, and concentrated 30,000 troops at HAIPHONG in INDO-CHINA. They have advanced over 60 miles in 6 days; occupied MARTABAN; crossed the SALWEEN at PAAN and are marching towards THATON, an important Railway Centre. Allied troops have fallen back on the River Bilin—55 miles from PEGU, on the road and railway line between RANGOON and MANDALAY.

**Netherlands East Indies.**—The enemy has also launched a full scale attack on SUMATRA, the first step being the capture as already reported of PALEMBANG—an oil centre, by landing para-troops in force. With the fall of PALEMBANG, the adjacent island of BANKA is threatened, and if BANKA should fall the encirclement of SINGAPORE already almost accomplished would be complete. British, American and Netherlands air craft have bombed the Japanese fleet in the straits of BANKA, and scored direct hits on 5 transports and 2 cruisers.

PALEMBANG is a supreme example of sacrifice. The value of the equipment destroyed before evacuation is estimated at between 50 and 65 million pounds.

The enemy has occupied the ANAMBAS ISLANDS—east of MALAYA.

**The Philippines**.—Heavy fighting continues in the BATAAN PENINSULA in the PHILIPPINES.

**Australasia**.—Japanese aircraft made a reconnaissance of the South Coast of PAPUA, and carried out unsuccessful attacks on allied shipping in the Timor Sea. PORT DARWIN has been bombed.

**China**.—The Chinese have recaptured MENGCHENG and KOYANG, and secured local successes in East CHEKIANG, AUHWEI and N. KIANGSI areas.

**The Western Hemisphere**.—The first Axis attacks on the Western Hemisphere have been made on ARUBA (Dutch WEST INDIES), and WILLEMSTAD (CURACAO), by hostile submarines identified as German. Four tankers and a refinery were torpedoed, with the loss of 2 of the former.

**The Escape of the German Warships**.—The other big event of the week is the escape of the German warships—*Scharnhorst*, *Gneisenau* and *Prinz Eugen* from BREST, where they had remained in hiding for nearly a year, hammered incessantly by R. A. F. sorties. On Thursday night they slipped out, and of the two routes open to them either round the British Isles or up the Channel preferred the latter course, being a shorter run, part of which could be carried out in darkness. When the ships were sighted, Coastal Craft of the Dover Naval Command, the British Fleet Air Arm and the R.A.F. carried out a combined attack, securing at least 2 direct hits; but hugging the French coast and escorted by an 'umbrella' of hundreds of planes, the enemy put up a heavy smoke screen and an intense barrage of artillery fire, behind which he escaped, safe, though damaged. The ships will be out of action for some time.

The British Admiralty considers the event an advantage to the British position, taking the view that the escape of these ships from BREST has removed a standing threat to the Allied flank on the Atlantic routes.

An inquiry in secret will be held into the causes which led to the safe escape of the enemy.

**Russia**.—The Germans have now receded to a defensive line, from which they are putting up a stiff resistance. Their system of defence consists of a number of areas of resistance overlapping one another. But

the Russians have proved themselves equal to the new tactics, and have breached the line at a number of points. Russian forces now stand within 72 miles of the old Polish frontier. The Germans are reported to be preparing to retire from KHARKOV.

**Libya**.—Here the enemy is preparing for a fresh thrust, and the Allied forces carry on their aggressive activities in the EL GAZALA—TMIMI—MEKLI area. Allied aircraft surprised an enemy force of 30 dive-bombers and fighters between TMIMI and MEKILI, and practically wiped them out. Probably as a result of this Rommel is now reported to be withdrawing his columns westwards from his advanced positions at EL GAZALA. British Naval Aircraft have made successful torpedo attacks on two Italian cruisers and a destroyer in central Mediterranean.

**Greeks under the 'New Order'**.—Harrowing tales of starvation arrive from GREECE, where it is said that during the first half of February at least 500 persons died daily of starvation. Former Generals, Admirals, and millionaires are reported to be queueing up for food. Children "scrape the ground and eat old seed potatoes, roots and even bark from trees". The loss of the Turkish ship *Kurtulus*, which was bringing them food, is a heavy blow to these down-trodden people.

**China's Day** :—In commemoration of the visit to INDIA of the Chinese Generalissimo and Madame Chiang March 2 will be celebrated as China's Day in India, when the Viceroy's War Purposes Fund will be thrown open to subscriptions for CHINA's War Charities.

## ALLIED Air Raids over ENEMY and ENEMY-occupied COUNTRIES.

| Date. | Targets. | Damage caused by air bombardment. | Aircraft losses for Allies. | Aircraft losses for Enemies. |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**9—2—42 (Monday).**

**GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE. (By British planes.)**

**NIGHT :—**

**The docks** at BREST.

**LIBYA. (By British planes).**

**Offensive sweeps** over forward areas in CYRENAICA.

**Dispersed aircraft** on the landing ground at MARTUBA.

# ALLIED Air Raids over ENEMY and ENEMY-occupied COUNTRIES—*cont.*

| Date. Targets. | Damage caused by air bombardment. | Aircraft losses for Allies. | Aircraft losses for Enemies. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **9—2—42. (Monday)—cont.** | | | |
| **MEDITERRANEAN Islands. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **Naval Workshops, stores and submarine jetties** in CRETE and DODECANESE. | | | |
| **EASTERN FRONT. (By Russian planes).** | | | |
| **Aircraft on the ground and air combats** along the entire front. | | | 4 planes. |
| **FAR EAST—SINGAPORE. (By American and British planes.)** | | | |
| **Enemy positions and landings** in western SINGAPORE. | | | |
| **NEW GUINEA. (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| **Enemy shipping** off the east coast of NEW GUINEA. | | | |
| **10—2—42 (Tuesday).** | | | |
| **GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **NIGHT:—** | | | |
| **Military objectives** in north-west GERMANY includings BREMEN. **The docks** at BREST. | | No loss. | |
| **LIBYA. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **Objectives** in DERNA and MARTUBA areas. | | | |
| **CRETE. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **The aerodrome** at HERAKLION. | | | |
| **EASTERN FRONT. (By Russian planes).** | | | |
| **Air combats and aircraft on the aerodromes** along the whole front. | | 8 planes. | 12 planes. |
| **FAR EAST—BURMA. (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| **Enemy concentrations** in the MARTABAN sector. | | | |

| Date. Targets. | Damage caused by air bombardment. | Aircraft losses for Allies. | Aircraft losses for Enemies. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **THAILAND. (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| **Enemy concentrations** at CHENGRAI. | | | |
| **11—2—42 (Wednesday).** | | | |
| **GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **NIGHT:—** | | | |
| **Objectives** at MANNHEIM. **The docks** at BREST and LEHAVRE. **Enemy aerodromes** in occupied territory. | | 2 planes. | |
| **LIBYA. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **The landing ground** at MARTUBA. | | | |
| **The harbour** at TRIPOLI. | | | |
| **SICILY. (By British planes)** | | | |
| **An aerodrome** at CATANIA. | | | |
| **EASTERN FRONT. (By Russian planes).** | | | |
| **Air combats and aircraft on the aerodromes** along the whole front. | | 8 planes. | 17 planes. |
| **FAR EAST—PACIFIC (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| **A Japanese aircraft-carrier** in the Gulf of BONI. | The vessel in flames. | | 4 planes. |
| **BURMA. (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| **Enemy forces** in MOULMEIN and on the River SALWEEN. | | | |
| **12—2—42 (Thursday).** | | | |
| **GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **DAY:—** | | | |
| **German battleships** in the ENGLISH CHANNEL. | All the ships hit. | | |
| No information available about night bombing. | | | |

# ALLIED Air Raids over ENEMY and ENEMY-occupied COUNTRIES—*cont.*

| Date. Targets. | Damage caused by air bombardment. | Aircraft losses for Allies. | Aircraft losses for Enemies. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **12—2—42. (Thursday)—cont.** | | | |
| **LIBYA. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **Air duel** over MATRUH area. | | | 1 plane. |
| **Harbour aeras and shipping** at TRIPOLI. | Big fires started. | | |
| **GREECE. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **The dockyards** at SALAMIS. | | | |
| **Crete. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **The aerodrome** at HERAKLION. | | | |
| **SICILY. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **The aerodrome** at CATANIA. | | 6 planes. | |
| **EASTERN FRONT. (By Russian planes).** | | | |
| **Air combats and aircraft on the aerodromes** along the whole front. | | 7 planes. | 16 planes. |
| **FAR EAST—BURMA (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| **Enemy communications** in the MARTABAN area. | | | |
| **SINGAPORE. (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| **Jap positions** on the Island. | | | |
| **13—2—42 (Friday).** | | | |
| **GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **NIGHT :—** | | | |
| **COLOGNE** and **AACHEN** (in GERMANY). | | | |
| **The docks** at LE HAVRE. | | | |
| **An aerodrome** in occupied FRANCE. | | No loss. | |
| **LIBYA. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **Enemy positions** in CYRENAICA. | | | |
| **MEDITERRANEAN. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **A merchant vessel** in the Central MEDITERRANEAN. | Sunk. | | |
| **SICILY. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **The aerodromes** at CATANIA and GHERBINI. | | | |

| Date. Targets. | Damage caused by air bombardment. | Aircraft losses for Allies. | Aircraft losses for Enemies. |
|---|---|---|---|
| **CRETE. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **The aerodrome** at HERAKLION. | | | |
| **EASTERN FRONT. (By Russian planes).** | | | |
| **Air combats and aircraft on the aerodromes** along the whole front. | | 8 planes. | 11 planes. |
| **FAR EAST—NEW BRITAIN. (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| **An aerodrome** in NEW BRITAIN **shipping** at GASAMATA. | | | |
| **BURMA. (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| **Enemy troop concentrations** in the PAAN area. | | | |
| **14—2—42 (Saturday).** | | | |
| **GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **NIGHT :—** | | | |
| **RHINELAND** and **other objectives** in the RHINELAND. | | | |
| **The docks** at LE HAVRE, DUNKIRK and OSTEND. | | | |
| **Enemy aerodromes** in occupied territories. | | 2 planes. | |
| **LIBYA. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **Air battles** over the ACROMA area. | | No loss. | 20 planes. |
| **The harbour installations** at BENGHAZI. | | | |
| **The aerodrome** at BERKA. | | | |
| **SICILY. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **The aerodromes** CATANIA, COMISO and GHERBINI. | | | |
| **EASTERN FRONT. (By Russian planes).** | | | |
| **Air combats and aircraft on the aerodromes** along the whole front. | | 5 planes. | 7 planes. |
| **FAR EAST—BURMA. (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| **Japanese war meterial dumps** in the PAAN and MARTABAN areas. | | | |

| Date | Targets | Damage caused by air bombardment | Aircraft losses for Enemies | Aircraft losses for Allies |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **SUMATRA. (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| | **Japanese warships and transports** near SUMATRA. | | | |
| **15—2—42 (Sunday).** | | | | |
| | **GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE. (By British planes).** | | | |
| **NIGHT :—** | **The docks** at ST. NAZAIRE. **An enemy supply ship** off the NORWEGIAN **Coast.** | | No loss. | |
| | **LIBYA. (By British planes).** | | | |
| | **Offensive sweeps** over CYRENAICA. | | | |
| | **An enemy column** in the GADD EL ANMAR Zone. | | | |
| | **EASTERN FRONT. (By Russian planes).** | | | |
| | **Air combats and aircraft on the aerodromes** along the entire front. | | 7 planes. | 11 planes. |
| | **FAR EAST—BURMA. (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| | **Enemy forward positions** in the PAAN area. | | | |

## ENEMY Air Raids over ALLIED Territories.

| Date | Targets | Damage caused by air bombardment | Aircraft losses for Enemies | Aircraft losses for Allies |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **10—2—42 (Tuesday).** | **BRITAIN (By German planes).** | | | |
| | No air activity. | | | |
| | **MEDITERRANEAN. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | **MALTA.** | | | |
| | **FAR EAST—SINGAPORE. (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **British forward positions** in west SINGAPORE. | | | |
| | **D. E. I. (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **Aerodromes** in North SUMATRA. | | | |
| **11—2—42 (Wednesday).** | **BRITAIN. (By German planes).** | | | |
| **NIGHT :—** | **MERSEY SIDE.** | | | |

## ENEMY Air Raids over ALLIED Territories—*cont.*

| Date | Targets | Damage caused by air bombardment | Aircraft losses for Enemies | Aircraft losses for Allies |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **MEDITERRANEAN. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | **MALTA.** | | | |
| | **FAR EAST—BURMA (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **THATON.** | | | |
| | **NEW GUINEA. (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **SAMARAI.** | | | |
| | **SINGAPORE. (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **British positions** in SINGAPORE. | | | |
| **12—2—42 (Thursday).** | **BRITAIN. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | No information available. | | | |
| | **RUSSIA. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | **MOSCOW.** | | 2 planes. | |
| | **LIBYA. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | **TOBRUK.** | Many more damaged. | 4 planes. | |
| | **MEDITERRANEAN. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | **MALTA.** | | 1 plane. | |
| | **FAR EAST—BURMA. (By American and British planes).** | | | |
| | **British troops** in MARTABAN Sector. | | | |
| **13—2—42 (Friday).** | **BRITAIN. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | No information available. | | | |
| | **MEDITERRANEAN. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | **MALTA.** | | 1 plane. | |
| | **FAR EAST—BURMA. (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **British communications** in the MARTABAN area. | | | |
| | **SUMATRA—(N. E. I.) (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **The oil centre** at PALEMBANG. | | | |

## ENEMY Air Raids over Allied Territories—*cont.*

| Date. | Targets. | Damage caused by air bombardment. | Aircraft losses for Enemies. | Aircraft losses for Allies. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **14—2—42 (Saturday).** | | | | |
| | **BRITAIN. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | No information available. | | | |
| | **MEDITERRANEAN. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | **MALTA.** | | | |
| | **FAR EAST. (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **SINGAPORE.** | | 3 planes | |
| | **(D. E. I.). (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **Aerodromes in Northern SUMATRA.** | | | |
| **15—2—42 (Sunday).** | | | | |
| | **BRITAIN. (By German planes).** | | | |
| **NIGHT :—** | | | | |
| | North-East Coast of ENGLAND and South-East coast of SCOTLAND. | Very slight damage. | 1 plane. | |
| | **MEDITERRANEAN (By German planes).** | | | |
| | **Shipping in the Central MEDITERRANEAN.** | | 2 planes. | |
| | **MALTA.** | | 2 planes. | |
| | **RUSSIA. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | **MOSCOW.** | | 3 planes. | |
| | **FAR EAST (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **SINGAPORE.** | | | |
| | **BURMA. (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **British troops in the MARTABAN area.** | | | |
| **16—2—42 (Monday).** | | | | |
| | **BRITAIN. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | No air activity at all. | | | |
| | **MEDITERRANEAN (By German planes).** | | | |
| | **MALTA.** | | | |
| | **RUSSIA. (By German planes).** | | | |
| | **MOSCOW.** | | 3 places. | |
| | **FAR EAST—TIMOR SEA. (By Jap planes).** | | | |
| | **Allied shipping in the TIMOR SEA.** | No damage at all. | | |

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# SIDE LIGHTS.

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**SINGAPORE.** There is no use minimising the seriousness of the loss of SINGAPORE. To do so would be as foolish as to be panicky over the event. It *is* a heavy blow, fraught with far reaching consequences.

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**THE DANGER.** It means a transformation of the whole Pacific scene, with a developing threat to BURMA, INDIA, AUSTRALIA, and it may be to the MIDDLE EAST and even

AFRICA—all these possibly—but not probably and simultaneously. JAPAN has enough to do already to safeguard herself and her earlier plunder while foraging for fresh prey—nearer home—in the INDIES and the PHILIPPINES.

The enemy's intentions, however, are still undisclosed. He has spread his tentacles far and wide from VLADIVOSTOK to PORT DARWIN. Part of this may be bluster but the enemy is too cunning to be frantic.

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**AT INDIA'S DOOR.** Regarding India, the warning has been issued that the war has come to our own doors. A military spokesman at NEW DELHI has announced that Japanese ships are operating in the Bay of Bengal, and there is no reason why the enemy should not launch sea-borne raids on, or even try a landing in, INDIA.

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**OUR DUTY.** At this moment our duty is clear. It is the hour of INDIA's peril, as well as her trial and testing-time, when she must hold her head high, calm, resolute, undismayed, unconquerable. Panic is the vice of cowards—the one thing that will betray us as well as strengthen the hands of the enemy. Our best armour is courage and confidence—which our philosophies have preached through the ages—let us hope not in vain. As Mr. Churchill has pointed out to his country and the Empire-only 'one fault, one crime, and one crime only' can rob us of victory—the 'moral crime'—'whosoever is guilty of that crime or of bringing it about in others—of him let it be said that it were better that a millstone were hung about his neck and that he were cast into the sea.'

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**BUT WE SHALL NOT FAIL.** Victory—final, overwhelming victory is as certain as the day follows the night. Here are a few reasons :—

1. JAPAN may possess air and sea advantage for the moment but in the long run she simply cannot withstand the combined retaliation of the greatest military powers on earth—GREAT BRITAIN, AMERICA and RUSSIA, supplemented by the efforts of the other Allied nations, making up three-fourths of the population of the globe—some 900,000,000 people. This is unthinkable—impossible.

2. JAPAN's ultimate strength is in her Axis alliance. Should Germany collapse a Japanese débacle should follow. When GERMANY falls, as she will, all the Allied legions on land, sea and air will be diverted to the east to overwhelm and confound the latest foe. It is only a question of time—time which is on the Allied side and against the enemy.

3. And the German ogre, beaten and battered for the past 9 months now lies gasping in agony, sprawling on the Russian snows. The legend of Hitlerian invincibility has been broken. The conquering hero is in retreat, with all EUROPE rising against him in the rear. Stalin has promised to see him finished before the year is over.

4. Allied production is expanding into colossal dimensions, especially in BRITAIN and AMERICA. Vast new armies are being raised behind the URALS, the CAUCASUS, in the U. S., CANADA, AUSTRALIA, South AFRICA and INDIA.

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**LET US NOT RECRIMINATE.** With such hope and in such faith let us not recriminate. How easy to say that some one has blundered, to grow wise after the event, to preach strategy, and demand a change of horses in midstream. But these will in no wise assist. Let us profit by our mistakes surely, but let us profit rather by experience—for no one can escape making mistakes, and by the wisdom that comes of fortitude and a balanced mind, amidst perils free ourselves and the world from the darkness of slavery and death.

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**LET US HAVE NO ILLUSIONS.** But the tide is not going to turn by legerdemain. Hard work and co-operation are the conditions of success. We in INDIA should play our part—increase war production and serve, according to need, in the front line and behind, and on the home front.

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**VICTORY.** Victory is certain. It has been said that the darkest hour precedes the dawn. St. HELENA followed AUSTERLITZ. BRITAIN has lost battles but never a victory.

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**MUSLIM CULTURE IN PERIL.** It is not generally known that the shifting of the battle scene to the EAST INDIES is a menace to Muslim culture in the FAR EAST. The NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES is predominently Muslim and devotedly religious. It has been estimated that one-fifth of the pilgrims to MECCA annually are from the NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES. These equatorial Muslims are a fine blend of the assertive spirit of Islam and the contemplative east. The Islamisation of INDONESIA goes back to 1300 A. D., when the first band of missionaries from Southern INDIA landed in SUMATRA together with the Muslim traders. From ATJEH, their headquarters in SUMATRA, they sallied to JAVA, BORNEO, MALAY, the PHILLIPPINES, and the CELEBES, preaching the religion of the Crescent. JAVA is to-day nine-tenths Muslim. Now SHINTO batters at her gates, casting an evil eye on this ancient hardy people.

**THE BALKANS IN A QUANDARY.** The BALKANS are now on the brink of a fiasco, and may prove the grave of Hitlerian diplomacy. HUNGARY is being wooed at the moment to throw in her armies for a spring offensive. This is the meaning of the recent visits of Ribbentrop, Ciano, and Keitel to BUDAPEST. For this Mr. Rasuadynagy, President of the Hungarian Chamber has been feasted, féted and lionised of late in BERLIN; and Stephen Horthy the Admiral's son has been promised a Vice-Regency. But HUNGARY will supply the cannon fodder only if the remainder of TRANSYLVANIA is transferred to her. She would rather stand aloof in order to fall later on the victims surviving the war.

By the Second Award of VIENNA, RUMANIA which lost a good part of TRANSYLVANIA to HUNGARY, still retains a bit of it, and Admiral Horthy's present demand for the surviving morsel is a mortification hard for General Antonescu to bear. Antonescu, it may be remembered was orginally consoled for the loss of TRANSYLVANIA by the prospect of recovering BESSARABIA from RUSSIA, and establishment of his own Ersatz Empire in RUSSIA by the conquest of the territory beyond the DNEISTER. The disaster that has now overtaken the enemy on the DNEISTER and in the CRIMEA has shattered these hopes. So, when Hitler asked for fresh help for the spring offensive, Antonescu is said to have reminded him that he had already lost 200,000 men. RUMANIA has now not only no 'empire' across the DNEISTER to dream of but the part of TRANSYLVANIA that she has may be lost to her. She is disgruntled; and not even the present of a luxurious bullet-proof Mercedes car, which Hitler is reported to have made to Antonescu, can appease him.

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**VICHY AND SPAIN.** The ways of VICHY FRANCE are craven. While the Germans themselves do not deny that French deliveries of supplies to Rommel are taking place through French territory, Count de Brinon, the VICHY envoy at PARIS, is telling the world that Tunisian Railways are too narrow to carry the reinforcements. But there is no doubt that VICHY is transporting cars, lorries and stores to LIBYA. Rommel's Economic Mission in North AFRICA is collecting supplies in French territory. Under the terms of the Franco-Italian Armistice of 1940 BIZERTA and other ports should have been made 'unusable from the standpoint of their defensive and offensive capacity'; but so far from that they have been converted into supply bases.

In this act of smuggling SPAIN is a partner. This is the reason of the recent visit of Marshal Pétain to General Franco (now said to be a visit of Madame Pétain) and the staff talks between General Nogues, the French Commandant in MOROCCO, and General Orgaz, High Commissioner for Spanish MOROCCO. The recent riots at TANGIERS are also Nazi-inspired.

**AXIS LIES.** Here are a few of the latest samples of Axis lies: comment is unnecessary :—

1. The TOKYO paper *Nichi Nichi* reports from SAIGON that Sir Archibald Wavell, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces in the S. W. Pacific, who is on a journey to BATAVIA, has handed his resignation following the desperate situation of the Allied Forces in East ASIA. The British Government has already appointed Sir Robert Brooke-Popham as his successor. Sir Robert has already left BRITAIN to take over his new function (Italian Broadcast in French—January 19).

2. "Reference is being also made to the escape of Sir Shenton Thomas, Governor-General of the FEDERATED MALAY STATES; who ran off to CALCUTTA where he delivered a radio address urging the defence of SINGAPORE to the last man" (Japanese news in English—Jan. 13, 1942).

3. There is a rumour that General MacArthur, Commander of the defeated U. S. PHILIPPINE forces, secretly boarded an American hospital ship *Mactan*, 2,067 tons and fled to AUSTRALIA (Japanese news in English—Jan., 17, 1942).

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# ALIVE BUT NOT KICKING. THE "SCHARNHORST" AND THE "GNEISENAU". CAPTIVES IN OWN PORTS. R. A. F'S. "CALLS" AT BREST.

by

*Wing Commander L. V. Fraser.*

[*The article is of special interest in view of the escape of these ships from Brest during the week*—Ed.]

The port of Brest, which shelters the German battle-cruisers, *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, is repeatedly raided. There has only been one occasion when British bombers did not have the upper hand of the battle-cruisers. That was when they slipped out into the Atlantic to menace the life-line between Britain and the United States and sank 20 merchant vessels.

The R. A. F. was determined, when the two ships took refuge in Brest at the end of March, that they should not be allowed to get out again and do more damage to Atlantic convoys. So far the R. A. F. has been eminently successful in blockading the warships. Between March 30, 1941, when the ships were bombed for the first time in Brest, and January 26, 1942, only

one of the ships has been able to emerge. This was the *Scharnhorst*, and she was only out for a few days in July, 1941, when she made a trial trip to La Pallice, a port further down on the French coast. She was bombed back to Brest by a daylight attack by four-engined bombers, and has been kept there ever since.

## THIRD COMPANION.

The two battle-cruisers were joined in this refuge for damaged battleships by the cruiser, *Prinz Eugen*, which had fled to escape the fate of the *Bismarck*, which she had been accompanying on her foray in the Atlantic. Since then the *Prinz Eugen* has also been hit and kept in Brest.

Bombers are no more able to sink warships in dock than are other warships. Where they have the advantage is that they can attack where no fleet could penetrate ; they can bomb a naval base whose shore guns could certainly sink any ship that ventured into attack. In their dry docks warships cannot be torpedoed either from the air or by any ship. They cannot be bombed from a low-level because no bomb dropped from a low-level would have the velocity required to pierce their armour plating. So the R. A. F. has made and sustained the only possible kind of attack—high-level bombing with heavy armour-piercing bombs, where one hit must be obtained at the cost of many near misses, and the most that could be hoped for was crippling damage which could be repaired in a month or so, but not before bombers were over Brest again.

## HEAVILY ARMOURED DECKS.

In the *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau* weight of guns has been sacrificed to armour plating. Their largest guns are of 11-inch calibre, but their decks are more heavily armoured than the decks of any ships in the German Navy. A good example of the damage that can be done is proved by photographs taken from the bombers themselves of the attack of December 18. This was a daylight attack made by all three types of the R. A. F.'s heaviest bombers—Stirlings, Halifaxes and Manchesters. As the photographs show, a heavy armour-piercing bomb fell between the starboard side of the stern of the *Gneisenau* and the side of the dry dock in which she lay. The distance between the ship and the side of the dock is only some 20 or 30 feet, and an explosion in this confined space would be very effective. The bomb may well have damaged the ship's steering gear, the shafts of the propellers and the propellers themselves. Fragments of the bomb may well have penetrated the side of the ship. Similarly another bomb fell between the portside of the stern of the *Scharnhorst* and the side of her dock, with the same probable effect. The photograph showed that during this attack a great many other bombs dropped very close to the ship. It is very probable that they damaged the docks themselves, and so helped to delay the repairs to the ships.

## DIFFICULTIES OF ATTACK.

Though made from a high-level, such attacks, both by day and night, require great courage and determination. Brest is at least as heavily defended as any town in Germany, which is in itself a measure of the importance the Germans attach to these formidable warships. On December 18, heavy bombers flew in unbroken formation straight through an appalling barrage, and straight through fighters that were coming up on all sides. The wing commander who led the squadron of Stirlings got the *Scharnhorst's* and *Gneisenau's* docks in perfect position below him, put the nose of his Stirling down and drove for his aiming point. He went down steadily for 500 feet, then flattened out and gave the word to release the bombs. As he turned away he saw his bombs falling, one short, two right over the docks and one beyond.

It is a naval victory to keep the enemy's ships in port. By holding the warships in Brest for nearly a year the R. A. F. has done a year's good work. It has protected many convoys; It has set free capital ships of the British Navy for work in other seas; it has tied up many squadrons of fighters which the Germans needed urgently on Russian and other fronts, and hundreds of anti-aircraft guns which were almost as urgently needed elsewhere.

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# SALIENT FACTS OF PACIFIC SITUATION. ALLIED SEA POWER MUST REASSERT ITSELF. MAIN TASKS BEFORE THE THREE GREAT DEMOCRACIES.

by

*Robert Frazer.*

(*In a recent B. B. C. Talk*).

Behind the whirling, sensational picture of events in the South-Western Pacific, there stand solid, salient facts—facts which, unlike the day's news, do not change. They are the true facts against which each day's news has to be measured.

The first of them is that nothing can restore the position of the Allied nations in the South-Western Pacific, except the reassertion of Allied sea power. The second is that somewhere in the Pacific there is an Allied battle-fleet, and that at some point and time it is bound to appear and to act. That will be the crucial moment of the Pacific war, and it may come very soon.

Those are the concrete facts of the situation. Let us take them one by one.

## REASON FOR JAPANESE SUCCESSES.

First, the reassertion of Allied sea power. The Japanese successes in the South-Western Pacific are the successes of the Japanese fleet. In Malaya, in the Philippines, in Sarawak and in the islands of the Dutch East Indies, the Japanese armies have achieved considerable military victories. Each of those Japanese armies is an expeditionary force.

Every single Japanese soldier in Malaya, in the Philippines and in the Dutch East Indies, every Japanese gun or tank has been carried there by sea, in Japanese transports convoyed by units of the Japanese fleet. So far, those armies have been able to land more or less where they liked and more or less when they liked, and when they have landed nothing has been able to stand against their numerical superiority.

When we used to look at a map of the South-Western Pacific in the days before the Pacific war, we used to calculate that a Japanese land offensive on the present scale would not be practicable. The basis of that calculation was that the Allied navies would be able to prevent the establishment of safe and stable Japanese lines of communication across the waters of the South-Western Pacific.

But the bottom has dropped out of that calculation for the time being. For the time being the Japanese lines of communication are all right, and so long as they are all right the Japanese expeditionary forces are all right too, but as soon as they are cut, then each and every one of the Japanese expeditionary forces is certainly doomed to wither, as the branches of a ringed tree. And that is why the reassertion of Allied naval power is, and must remain, the first act of the Pacific situation, because it is only naval power that can cut those lines of communication.

## HIGH SECRETS OF THE PACIFIC.

Now, let us take the second fact. Somewhere, at some undisclosed point in the Pacific, there is an Allied battlefleet. Its background, and most of its body is, of course, the American Pacific fleet. There has been absolutely no news of where this battlefleet is. Some people seem to be puzzled at this absence of news. But it is not only true that we do not know where the Allied battlefleet is, we do not know where the Japanese battlefleet is, either.

We have a certain amount of news where some of their smaller units and a few of the battleships of the Japanese fleet have been, but the world knows no more about the present position of Admiral Yamamoto's eight modern battleships with their attendant cruisers—no more, that is, about the Japanese hiding place, than it does about the whereabouts of the American battlefleet. Those are the two high secrets of the Pacific. It will be almost worth a battleship to either fleet to know where the other is.

But if we do not know where the Allied battlefleet is, we do at any rate know very certainly where the Japanese High Command wants it to be. They want it to be dispersed in defence operations all over the Pacific, so that it would be unable to supply decisive intervention at the one point where intervention would be decisive.

And the bait was laid for the American fleet. It was supposed to defend California, it was supposed to be attached to Manila, or Wake Island, or Guam. Well, the trap was set and the bait laid, but into that trap the American fleet did not sail.

## TASK FOR U. S. NAVY.

The United States Pacific fleet will not be split up into small units thousands of miles apart— the statements of the United States Navy Department make that quite clear. Its task is to wreck Japanese sea power by bringing to action the main Japanese fleet. However far away from the scene of the land fighting the main Japanese fleet may be—it may be thousands of miles away—it is still the essential support of the entire Japanese adventure, and if the prop of the main fleet is knocked away, the entire venture will collapse.

It may seem at the moment as if the Japanese fleet rules the waves of the Western Pacific, it may seem to be able to do more or less what it likes, when it likes, but that is true only of the present phase of the Pacific war; just as the power of the German army to advance continuously once seemed a permanent feature of the East European front, but is now seen to have been characteristic only of one phase of it; just as the supremacy of the German Air Force seemed at one time a permanent feature of the West European front, but was proved by the victory of the Royal Air Force in the Battle of Britain to have been characteristic only of one phase of that too.

We have only read the first chapter of the naval war in the Pacific, and the second chapter, when it opens, may offer very different reading.

## MAIN JOBS AHEAD.

Allied resources in the Pacific, and Allied successes in North Africa and in Eastern Europe, where the Great Russian advance shows no signs of slackening, make it possible to see the main jobs which fall to the leaders of the Allies in the first half of 1942. For Russia, the wrecking of the main German Army on the one front where the Allies can fight it, and where a decision on land against Germany can alone be reached; for America, the wrecking of Japanese sea power in the Pacific; for Britain, the maintenance of the air offensive against Germany, resistance to the counter-attacks of the German air-force, the maintenance of the blockade and the holding of the Allied line in the Middle East.

They are not light tasks, but by and large the war does not go ill.

# BATTLE OF ATLANTIC AS IMPORTANT AS BEFORE.

# NEED TO PRESERVE BRIDGE OF SHIPS.

# AIR AID IN THE FAR EAST.

*by*

*Lieut.-Gen. Sir Douglas Brownrigg.*

Since December 7, when Japan made her treacherous attack on Pearl Harbour, there has been a very natural tendency for most eyes to become focussed on the Pacific. Yet the Battle of the Atlantic is not less important than it was a year ago; the withdrawal of any of our defensive strength from the Atlantic would immediately jeopardise the life-line on which, in the end, all else will depend. So long as Britain and America are tied together by a chain of ships, so long as both can keep their factory fires burning, victory is assured. Let that vital chain across the seas be weakened, or let the furnaces die down—and no success in any other part of the world will suffice for the defeat of Hitler and for all he stands for.

At the moment things go ill for our cause in the Pacific. Hong Kong has fallen, and most of Malaya is in enemy hands, and the threat of invasion has caused the Australians to mobilise their home guard and ask for immediate help. These things must not be allowed to lead to a dispersion of effort and weakness everywhere. Japan's chief object is to bring about such dispersion. Russia is doing grand service to the cause of the United Nations, by rather keeping up her pressure on the retreating Germans, than allowing pressure to slacken so as to take a hand in fighting Japan. The Royal Navy in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean is performing vital tasks in keeping the supply lines open, and encouraging Vichy to resist the efforts of Hitler to secure the French Navy and African ports. Our Navy is not as strong as we should like to see it in the Mediterranean; otherwise Rommel would not have been able to reinforce in men, munitions and machines.

What help can be given to the Far East? In 1940 command of the air over Britain saved her, and command of the air over Malaya will save her too. Reports from the front during the last few days show that there have already been some changes in the results of air fighting. Japanese losses have been mounting very rapidly. Not only is this the quickest and best type of support we can give, but it is of a kind which absorbs the least man-power (although the highest quality) and makes the least demand on our factories, for planes can be turned out quicker than tanks, and can operate in smaller numbers. We must have recourse to a strategic defensive in the Far East, as we were compelled to do in Europe, until the Russian Army, like an over-stretched piece of elastic, flew back in the face of the man who had very nearly stretched it to breaking point.

# JAPS NOT HAVING ALL THEIR OWN WAY.
# NO FULL FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT.
# SEA CONTROL IN DISPUTE.
# JAPANESE PLAN OF COMMERCE RAIDING IN INDIAN OCEAN.

by

*H. C. Ferraby.*

The prolonged series of attacks on a Japanese convoy in the Straits of Macassar by American and Dutch naval and air forces resulted in a crushing defeat for the invader. The number of transports sunk and warships damaged, perhaps sunk, during the operations, indicates perfectly clearly that Admiral Hart had succeeded in locating and dealing with "the most important Japanese invasions to date in the South China Seas."

This defeat must serve as a warning to the Japanese, for some of their boldest strokes, successful as they have proved previously, savoured of bravado. Already deeply engaged in an unsuccessful continental war in China, the Japanese elected to extend their aggression along a 4,000 mile front of sea warfare also, and to do it as a challenge to the two most powerful maritime nations of the world. They have calculated, no doubt, that Britain will be too fully occupied in the European zone to play much part in the Asiatic struggle, but upon what presumption they base their defiance of the numerical and material superiority of the United States, it is difficult to see. If they left out of their calculations altogether the Netherlands East Indies squadron and its air support, they have by now good reason to know that there was something wrong with the way they worked out the sum. The valiant Dutch battling for their island empire, which they have held in the face of multiple wars and attacks since the 16th century, have provided considerable interference with Japanese movements.

In the first four weeks of operations in the Eastern seas, the Japanese lost to naval and air attack by the United Nations two old battleships, three cruisers, nine destroyers, five submarines and 31 transports and supply ships. In addition, at least three cruisers and a number of auxiliaries were damaged by torpedo or bomb. Latterly there have been notable additions to those losses with the Straits of Macassor action. This was the most considerable engagement so far between the opposed forces in the zone, and the Japanese had a foretaste of the strength of opposition they must expect to encounter as the plans of the United Nations reach full co-ordination.

All these items, covering only the opening weeks of the struggle, show that there has been important interference with Japanese movements along their selected 4,000 miles of battle front at sea. They are only items. They

do not imply any immediate collapse of the whole Japanese effort in the South China Sea, but they do show that some of the more spectacular moves the Japanese made are like some of their manufactured articles—they are flimsy and unfitted to stand up to hard usage. It has seemed to some people that as the Japanese were landing troops in eight or ten widely separated territories, they had complete freedom of movement. That is far from being the case. The command of sea control and the movement by sea in that area is still very much in dispute.

The Japanese invasion has been launched in defiance of an axiom of strategy—that overseas expeditions cannot permanently be supported from a distant base in the face of hostile strength at sea. We have had one striking example of that in this war in the collapse of Italy's African empire. A part of the Japanese plan is to maintain commerce raiders in the Indian Ocean. The seizure of Malayan Penang and Port Swettenham by the Japanese is the first step to that end. The attacks on Rangoon have the same aim. No doubt Japanese ambition looks further still, possibly to the seizure of the great harbour of Trincomalee in Ceylon. To-day a navy that is going to carry on the policy of commerce destruction at sea has submarines available, vessels that are even more elusive than the fast-sailing privateers of the 18th century. Any serious development in raiding in the Indian Ocean would throw a big strain on the resources in men and ships of the United Navies. That is why so much depends on the maintenance of the present physical barrier of the East Indian Islands. Japan needs to establish herself there—and to defeat the American Fleet in the bargain—otherwise she can carry out only sporadic and unimportant raids past the Straits of Malacca. What the United Nations are determined to do is to deny her possession, as far as possible, of any base that could be used for interrupting Allied sea communications in the Indian Ocean.

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## THE WAR IN A NUTSHELL.
## ALLIED CO-ORDINATION IN EFFECT IN FAR EAST.
## BATTLE OF RAILWAYS IN RUSSIA.
## ROMMEL'S STRATEGY.

by

*Major-General Sir Charles Gwynn.*

In the Far East the Japanese continue to attack new points, but the difficulties they are now encountering in protecting convoys in so many directions from aircraft, submarine and light surface vessels are shown by the

highly successful attack on a convoy in the Straits of Macassar. Although naval superiority is the dominant factor in the Pacific, and the Japanese at the moment are in a strong position to control sea communications, their plans can be vitally affected by air power. As more high-performance British and American aircraft come into action, much will depend on how far Japan can maintain an adequate supply of modern types.

General MacArthur in the Philippines, and the Australians in Malaya, have shown that when the terrain does not serve their infiltration tactics Japanese attacks can be held. The arrival of substantial Chinese forces in Burma, the successful raids on Japanese airbases in Indo-China and Thailand, and the magnificent part that the Dutch are playing, all tend to indicate that although the crisis has not passed, the co-ordination of Allied defence is taking effect.

The great Russian thrust between Rzhev and the Valdai hills towards the Leningrad-Kiev railway, in the neighbourhood of Velikiye Luki, has produced the most definite and important results in a week in which operations have been intensified in all main theatres of war. Apart from the capture of important towns, and losses in material and men inflicted on the Germans, the thrusts have cut the railway leading to Rzhev from the west, leaving that bastion, to which the Germans evidently attached a special importance, partly encircled and dependent on the line running south of Vyasma. Since Vyasma itself is closely threatened, the position of Rzhev is precarious. Its capture would open the way to an advance towards Smolensk from the north-east.

It is evident that under winter conditions the Germans, depending mainly on mechanical transport, must tend to concentrate near the railways. On the other hand, Russian cavalry masses can operate at a distance from them, probably finding forage in the villages and thus easing supply problems. This may partly explain the success the Russians have had in encircling German centres of resistance. If the Russians can reach the railway at Velikiye Luki they will there interrupt the main German line of lateral communications which the Germans have for transferring reserves from one part of the front to another. The fewer the railways the Germans control, obviously the greater the effect of air attack on them. The German retreat has so far been carried out covered by strong rearguards, but the cumulative strain on their troops must be immense. In the south German communiqués admit heavy attacks, especially in the Kharkov region, but the Russians continue to be reticent as to their achievements in this area.

Pressure on the Germans around Leningrad is maintained, but it is still uncertain whether a major attempt to relieve the city will be made. It may come south of Lake Ilmen for the recapture of Kholm, and may have an important bearing on the situation in that region, which is at no great distance from the main communications of the German investing army.

The situation in Libya is confused and tense. What Rommel's intentions are in his latest counter-attack are still obscure, and his enterprising character and readiness to take risks add to the obscurity. Does he aim at recovering the whole of Cyrenaica, or is he, as I think, simply aiming at the defeat of General Ritchie's army, leaving his ultimate course to await the result of the battle? That Rommel has received considerable reinforcements, particularly in the air, is clear. If his efforts fail to achieve conclusive success, he will have expended strength and greatly increased the danger of his position. That great efforts are being made to reinforce him is evident. The release of the troops which captured Halfaya, and the opening of the Halfaya Pass, should however speed up the arrival of reinforcements for General Ritchie. It is surprising how long in these fluctuating tank battles the issue can remain uncertain—the elusiveness of tanks has been rather overlooked.

Britain's home front shares highly in the week's events of historic importance with the arrival of American troops in Northern Ireland. Their welcome, coming seven weeks after the entry of the U.S.A. into the war, is one of the first signs of joint planning of Allied resources decided upon during Mr. Churchill's American meeting with President Roosevelt.

# THE BIG BATTALIONS.

"The big battles", said Marshal Foch, "are won and lost in the human soul." Foch was not only a brave man but a hard-thinking strategist. He did not mean that material weapons are unimportant in a struggle against the full panoply of aggression. He meant that a battle once lost in the human soul cannot be finally won on the field, whereas a resolute spiritual decision can be implemented even against enormous physical odds.

If the true spirit of the French people could have asserted itself, Indo-China would not have been callously handed over to be used as the all important base for Japanese designs of conquest and plunder. If the true spirit of China had failed to assert itself under the inspired leadership of Chiang Kai-Shek, the insatiable locusts of Japan could not have been checked, as in four epic years they have been checked; nor could they be driven back, as at length they will be utterly driven back, to those islands from which they should never have emerged.

From the Germans (and it scarcely matters whether Tokyo has learned bestiality from Berlin or Berlin from Tokyo) comes a slogan different from that of Foch, who beat them in the soul and on the field. "God" says Dr. Goebbels, "is on the side of the big battalions." He said it loudly and repeatedly to Britain when that citadel seemed to be at the mercy of the triumphant legions of brutocracy. He does not say it now, when his idolised Fuehrer has complained of being outnumbered by those very Russian armies which the German radio had repeatedly annihilated.

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek herself has given us an epigram which embodies the truth of the matter. "Not only God", she once said, "but everybody else is on the side of the big battalions." She was not deceived by that battle-cry of traditional stupidity which has for so long drowned the finer accents of the German spirit, the dogma that Might is Right. But she knew, and China's fight proves it, that Right, if it is believed in passionately, accumulates through pain and struggle the material strength which can overthrow the apostles of blind and selfish force in all their battle-array. She knew, in fact, that the human race at large has a past and a future, and that it has only to win the battles of the soul to shape that future in a material sense. The decision must be made. The weapons come slowly to hands that have preferred the labours of peace. But in the end they prevail. The big battalions of China know that their cause has nothing to do with the acquisition of mines or plantations on behalf of some powerful minority. They are not fighting for the sake of a crazy race-theory or the primitive satisfaction of torturing the weak and destroying the precious and fragile things of life. They are fighting to preserve from all such beastliness their own homes, their own country, Asia and the world. God is on their side, and four-fifths of mankind is on their side also. For we fight for the same fundamentals.

We shall win, if we want to win. That is the simple proposition expressed by the visit to India of China's famous leaders. And none knows better than they why we want to win.

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# MADAME CHIANG-KAI-SHEK'S CALL TO INDIAN WOMEN.

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## WAR AT THE GATES OF INDIA.

War is at your very doors. As I came up from Calcutta to Delhi and saw your beautiful country and fertile lands, I prayed that you should never have to suffer what we have suffered in China.

But, if you are to escape this fate, you must be prepared to defend yourselves, for only by preparedness can you survive.

## REALISM.

First of all, I want to tell you what you are up against, and I think you would want to know it. I believe you are realists, for in spite of thousands of years of our heritage, enriched by the development of the most profound systems of philosophy yet evolved by any people in the world, the people of China and India are realists.

You may have to fight against a foe full of treachery. During the last five years, I have repeatedly pointed out what sort of people the Japanese are, and what they have been doing in China, but because the western world was too engrossed in other affairs they branded my admonitions as propaganda. Now that the world has had a taste of Japanese methods at Singapore and Manila, they are realising that what I said was not a figment of wartorn imagination, but bare facts.

## JAP TREACHERY.

In 1932 at Shanghai, when the Chinese and Japanese had agreed in principle on certain conditions and were on the eve of signing an agreement, that very night the Japanese bombed and set fire to the sleeping population of Chapei, and tens of thousands of people were killed and wounded. Just before the outbreak of the present Pacific hostilities, while the Japanese Ambassador to America and Kurusu, Jap Envoy, were carrying on conversations with Mr. Cordell Hull, the Japanese again, without warning, struck at Pearl Harbour.

**A nation which has treachery as its policy in international dealings can never be trusted. The Japanese are already at your door. They have already struck at China and Burma. Who knows what will happen when they strike at India? They will say to you: "We come to liberate you." But that is a lie.**

*Do you know what happened in Nanking? After our troops had withdrawn, the Japs rounded up every able-bodied men they could find there, tied them wrist to wrist, made them walk out of the town, beat them and bayoneted them. Later on the Japanese did not even take the trouble to kill them with bayonet or gun, but made them dig their own graves and buried them alive.*

## ACTS OF BARBARITY.

What did they do to our children? They captured them and took their blood for the purpose of blood transfusion. They also sent boatloads of our children to be trained as traitors to their own country. We have found many

little spies who told us that they had been trained by the Japanese to work against us. This happened especially after the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in 1932, when these children were carried off in thousands and specially drilled to work against their fatherland.

When the Japs occupy and seize a city, they try not only to loot everything, but they try to kill the very soul of the people, to do everything to deaden body and soul. When some of the surviving population were employed as labourers by Japs, they received as part payment injections of opium and heroin. The Japanese are an incredibly cruel and inhumanly callous enemy.

## CALL TO INDIAN WOMEN.

We did everything we could at first to appease the Japs, because we needed time in which to prepare ourselves. But when at last we knew the ruthlessness of the enemy, we had to take up arms, ill prepared as we were, for we realised that however terrible suffering and death may be, there was a worse thing—slavery of body and slavery of soul.

China to-day is an acknowledged ally of the democracies, but we have earned this name by fighting mostly with bare flesh and inferior arms, and by destroying everything of value which might fall into the hands of the enemy as we withdrew into the interior. We have burnt our fields; we have destroyed our houses and property in order to prevent the enemy from gaining them. We have this courage because we know that in order to save our national life we must have the fortitude to sacrifice our individual life.

As soon as the war started we, women of Zuauca, formed ourselves into a Women's Advisory Council, a national body. In each province we formed a provincial committee, and in each district a smaller branch was organised.

We followed a definite programme to help to win the war. We trained, and are continuing to train, thousands of young women to go to every part of the country to tell the people what the war is about.

## AIDING WAR EFFORT.

In India to-day there must be many people who still do not understand what the war is about, and who must be told. Many women from schools and colleges run away to join our war effort, because they said they could not study while their nation was in jeopardy. I have trained such women personally. Among other lines of work after their training they go behind the army and do liaison work between the army and the people.

At first the authorities asked how can girls go and work in the big hospitals where the men are so rough. Who could protect them? Do you know that

when the girls went there, the men called them army officers and saluted them as such? Now we receive hundreds of telegrams asking for more and more women nurses and workers for the hospitals. For not only are the girls appreciated for their nursing ability, but also for the fact that they provide wholesome and inspiring entertainment for the soldiers during their stay in the hospitals.

## SPIRIT OF NEW CHINA.

The spirit of the new China is, one for all and all for one. We are united by suffering, and victory will crown our effort. In every worthy enterprise, there must be people who are willing to sacrifice everything they have for what they hold most dear, if that is to be a success. We in China have those people. I do not mean the Generalissimo. I do not mean myself. I mean the people of China, the unsung heroes. Like India, China's roots are deep.

*In our fertile soil which is now soaked in the blood of our patriots, whether soldiers or Civilians, we shall grow fruit for the future. Thus runs a Chinese proverb. "Think only of sowing; Think not of reaping." We of this generation shall not reap the full benefits of what we have sown, but the generations to come will reap the fruits of our sacrifice. And as we to-day are reaping the fruits of the labour of our ancestors, so must we be willing to sow for our children and our children's children.*

# PROGRAMME OF LECTURES

OF THE

## Pudukkottai State War Information Bureau.

### LECTURE LXXXIII—(*Batch 5*).

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1942— | | | | |
| February ... | 21, Saturday ... | Town Hall | ... | 6.30 p. m. |
| | 22, Sunday ... | Muslim Association, Pudukkottai. | } | 5.30 p. m. |
| | | Tiruvarangulam | ... | 6.00 p. m. |
| | | Vamban | ... | 6.30 p. m. |
| | 23, Monday ... | Vellanur | ... | 6.00 p. m. |
| | | Sembattoor | ... | 6.30 p. m. |
| | 24, Tuesday ... | College (A) English | ... | 10.15 a. m. |
| | | Pallivasal | ... | 6.00 p. m. |
| | | Pillamangalam | ... | 6.30 p. m. |
| | 25, Wednesday | C. S. M. High School | ... | 10.00 a. m. |
| | | College (B) Tamil | ... | 10.15 a. m. |
| | | Rani's High School | ... | 10.15 a. m. |
| | | Kolavoipatti | ... | 6.00 p. m. |
| | | Kilaiyur (South) | ... | 6.30 p. m. |
| | 26, Thursday ... | Adanûr | ... | 6.00 p. m. |
| | | Aramanaippatti | ... | 6.30 p. m. |
| | 27, Friday ... | Kiranur | ... | 6.00 p. m. |
| | | Nanjur | ... | 6.30 p. m. |

### LECTURE LXXXIV—(*Batch 1*).

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 28, Saturday ... | Town Hall | ... | 6.30 p. m. |
| March ... | 1, Sunday ... | Puvarasakudi | ... | 6.00 p. m. |
| | | Venkatakulam | ... | 6.30 p. m. |
| | 2, Monday ... | Malampatti | ... | 6.00 p. m. |
| | | Perambur | ... | 6.30 p. m. |
| | 4, Wednesday | Udayalippatti | ... | 6.00 p. m. |
| | | Killukottai | ... | 6.30 p. m. |
| | 5, Thursday ... | Arimalam | ... | 6.00 p. m. |
| | | Keelanilaikkottai | ... | 6.30 p. m. |
| | 6, Friday ... | Tirumayyam | ... | 6.00 p. m. |
| | | Melur | ... | 6.30 p. m. |

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